



# rivers&trails



*rivers, trails, and conservation assistance program*

## LITTLE COLORADO RIVER WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP

### **Project Goal**

The mission of the Little Colorado River Multi-Objective-Management partnership (LCR-MOM) is to maintain and enhance the resources of the entire Little Colorado River watershed by encouraging partnerships, fostering education and communication among stakeholders and facilitating local strategies and projects.

### **Background**

The Little Colorado River Watershed covers nearly 27,000 square miles in northeast Arizona and northwest New Mexico. The main stem of the Little Colorado River begins near Springerville, Arizona and flows nearly 350 miles to the Colorado River. Almost half the watershed belongs to Native American Nations, about 23% of the total area is in private hands and the remainder is divided into public lands. Most of the watershed is rural. Economic activities include government, ranching, agriculture, mining, power generation, service industries, tourism, recreation, and wood products.

In 1997, Navajo County responded to acute flooding and sediment problems by utilizing the Corps of Engineers, "Flood Plain Management Assistance Program."

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- Resources database developed for centralized information management.
- Water Resources Reconnaissance Study completed in partnership with LCR-MOM.
- Quarterly sub-watershed workshops emphasizing problem-solving and regional collaboration.
- Created outreach materials including Clean Water Action Plan Success Story, newsletters, bulletins, brochure, and website.

### National Park Service Role

Rivers & Trails Program assistance was requested to help project partners design and implement a broad range of citizen participation tools as part of the watershed management program. Program staff have been instrumental in designing a planning process that established credibility with state and local governments and other stakeholders. NPS has provided facilitation to many of the watershed outreach meetings and is an active participant with the projects "executive committee."

NPS advocates implementing watershed projects at a local level and has achieved this by supporting a watershed coordinator. This coordinator effectively promotes community-based planning and quality of life issues for citizens in the watershed. Several communities are now exploring trails development opportunities for tourism, health and recreation.

NPS has provided leadership to the LCR-MOM organization as it's developed a strategic plan. Completed in November 2000, the plan identifies priorities and actions for the next 3-5 years which strengthen the organization and increases community knowledge of watershed issues. NPS is co-sponsoring a Watershed Symposium in 2001. Watershed science, local project successes, and strengthening community organizations are the major themes associated with this planned tri-annual symposium.

### Project Partners

- Navajo County, AZ
- Arizona Department of Game and Fish
- Little Colorado River Plateau Resource Conservation and Development Area, Inc.
- City of Winslow
- Navajo Nation
- The Hopi Tribe

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